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Consequence Management in COIN

“The contemporary operating environment often throws soldiers into situations where they must quickly establish working relationships with complete strangers: soldiers from other tactical units, law enforcement personnel from federal agencies, and relief coordinators from nongovernmental organizations.”ⁱ

Although the quote above by Colonel Christopher R. Paparone, U.S. Army, Retired, may seem obvious, it highlights the coordination and interaction between soldiers and different organizations that is necessary in the contemporary operating environment in order to be successful. More than ever, Army leaders are being challenged to fulfill a variety of duties as the United States conducts counterinsurgency (COIN) operations in the global war on terrorism and prepares for future conflict. One of these obligations, the role of a mediator and peacemaker, is of utmost importance in winning the hearts and minds of the local populace and completing the mission in a COIN operational setting. Success in a COIN environment is especially true as the U.S. military looks forward into the future and sees no other military force capable of defeating them in conventional combat, as demonstrated in Operation Desert Storm, Operation Enduring Freedom, and the conventional phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom. This idea of the U.S. as the only “hyper power”, called fourth generation warfare (4GW), was first defined in 1989 by a team of American analysts who used it to describe warfare’s return to a decentralized form.ⁱⁱ This concept further concludes that an insurgent movement can overcome a superpower by defeating its political leadership and

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dominating the information environment where popular support and national will are the center of gravity.ⁱⁱⁱ In such instances, the enemy is often immune to our technological advantages as they blend into the local population and leverage the nature of the information age against us in an attempt to gain legitimacy and win popular support from the mass base.

While COIN operations may differ regionally because of distinct environments, ideologies, objectives, and cultural variations, maintaining legitimacy, governance, and popular support continue to be a resounding objective of Coalition Forces (CF) in a COIN.^{iv} However, even when all of these conditions are met by the U.S. and CF, unavoidable events that result in collateral damage to civilians and sacred buildings take place while combating the enemy in a complex and obscure environment. It is the role of the Army leader to take these circumstances into consideration, and plan for them ahead of time through exercises and training in consequence management (CM). However, when these unexpected events are not anticipated in a COIN environment, they often result in an insurgent-led Information Operations (IO) effort where the enemy attempts to exploit these unintended consequences, gain support from the local populace and create a negative perception of U.S. and CF. David Galula explained this concept explicitly in his 1964 book *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* when he wrote: "The first basic need for an insurgent who aims at more than simply making trouble is an attractive cause, particularly in view of the risks involved and in view of the fact that the early supporters and the active supporters-not necessarily the same persons-have to be recruited by persuasion."^v In a 4GW conflict where both sides' primary objective is to

sway popular support, the need for CM is absolutely necessary to maintain legitimacy and stability with the host nation.

Identifying the Problem

In 1995, the term “consequence management” was first introduced into the national security lexicon in an attempt to establish how the United States would respond to terrorists employing weapons of mass destruction and how these consequences would be managed.^{vi} Defined in Field Manual 3-11.21, *Multiservice Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Consequence Management Operations*, CM are the actions taken to maintain or restore essential services and manage and mitigate problems resulting from disasters and catastrophes, including natural, manmade, or terrorist incidents.^{vii} While the United States government and military has addressed CM domestically through coordination among local, regional, national and international assets when unintended consequences take place, they have failed to provide guidance regarding the actions that should be followed after such an event outside the United States. Whereas CM operates on a large-scale in response to catastrophic events domestically, it also has the potential to help manage smaller-scale incidents in a COIN environment abroad where the short and long-term physical, socio-economic, and psychological effects can have detrimental second and third order effects to the U.S. and CF initiative. If the U.S. Army were to implement a pre-determined set of actions, or battle drill, into Doctrine and Training Publications in response to unintended consequences in a COIN environment, they will have a much better chance of winning over the mass base in a 4GW where IO are vital to overall mission success.

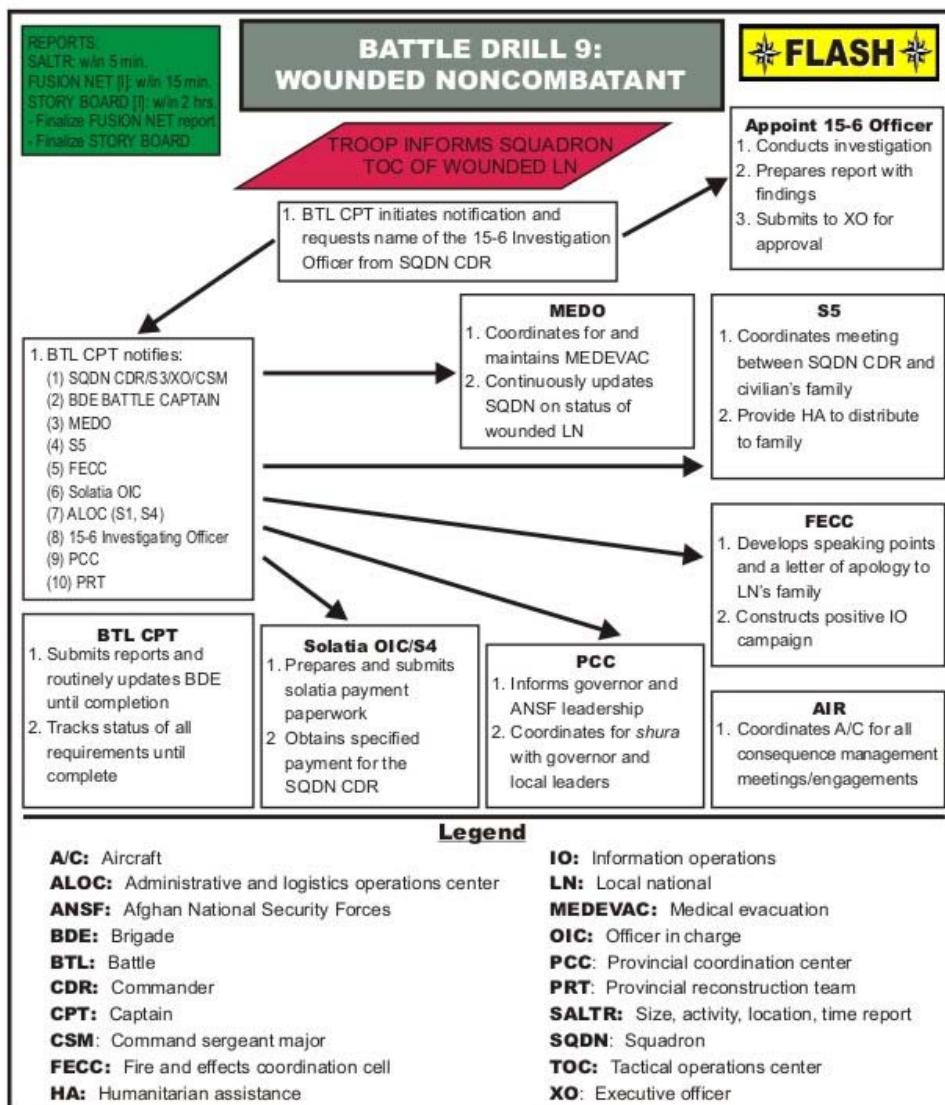
Learning the Hard Way

Task Force 4-73 Cavalry, 4th Brigade Combat Team of the 82nd Airborne Division experienced unintended consequences during their last deployment in the Afghanistan area of operations. Several events, such as the death of an Afghan National Security Forces local who unsuccessfully attempted to disarm unexploded ordnance and the accidental wounding of an Afghan civilian by a ricocheted warning shot, highlighted the need for CM within the COIN fight.^{viii} Subsequently, Task Force 4-73 Cavalry, 4th Brigade Combat Team of the 82nd Airborne Division developed tactics, techniques and procedures to “maintain local stability, legitimize local governance, and isolate the insurgents from their cause and support.”^{ix} The lessons learned and developed by TF 4-73 CAV from after-action reviews were disseminated throughout Combined Joint Task Force-82 as tools for CM.^x

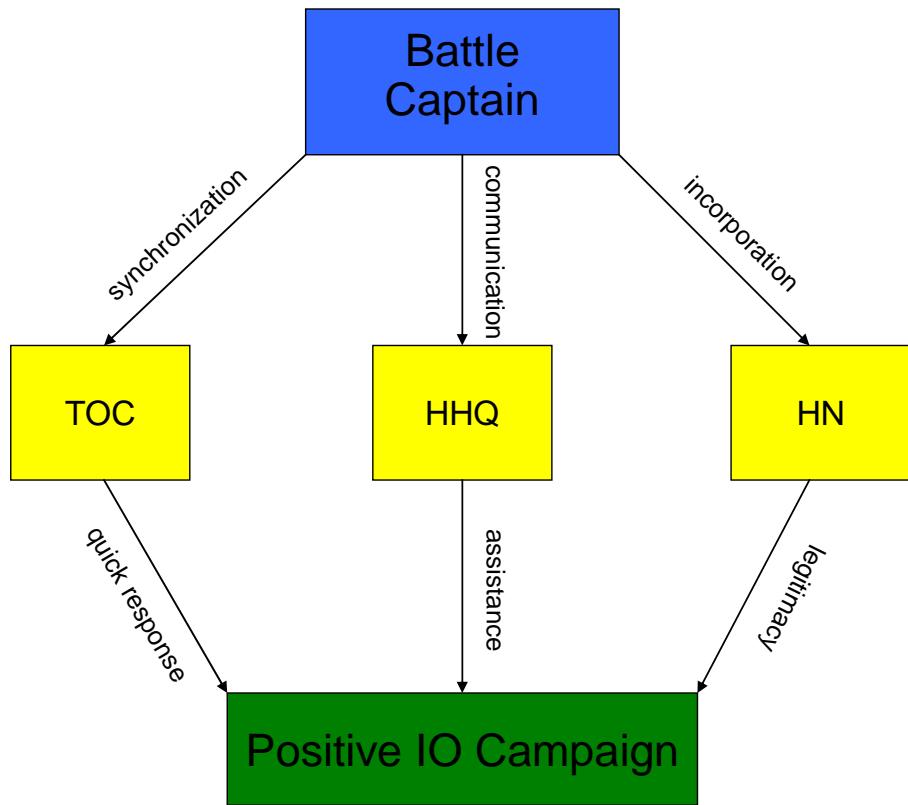
Using hindsight, it is obvious to see that CM is more than just a positive IO message to the local populace; it is a process that must be integrated holistically into all operations in a foreign environment. In particular, CM must be used to integrate and synchronize internal, external, local security and local governance actions to help prevent coordination problems when unplanned events do take place. Internally, all sections of the staff must synchronize their efforts within the battalion. Externally, the battalion must communicate at all times with higher headquarters, provincial reconstruction teams, military transition teams and sister units. Additionally, CM seeks to incorporate local security of the host nation and local governance (governors and tribal leaders) into the process.

Developing a Solution

The mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available, time available and civil considerations (METT-TC) should always dictate the necessary course of action to be taken in an organization's operational environment. The battle drill below (of a wounded noncombatant) created by Major Ernest Litynski for a Cavalry Squadron, is a template for CM that can be used as a reference in future COIN operations.^{xi} This schematic provides a visual description of the information flows and action that Major Litynski described in more detail in his accompanying paper.



The implementation of a battle drill for CM would have several positive effects in a COIN environment. First, it would create a systematic process to ensure that all staff members in the tactical operations center are notified in a timely manner to begin their respective role in the CM process and take appropriate action. Not only would this give staff members optimal time to start their respective duty in CM, it would act to synchronize the group. Secondly, this battle drill would increase coordination amongst higher headquarters and other units to create a common operating picture and a properly coordinated response. If conducted in a timely manner, information will be disseminated quickly to mitigate risk and resources can be consolidated to provide assistance. In an environment where things are changing constantly, maintaining communication is paramount to mission success. Thirdly, the incorporation of host nation security and governance within the CM process will guarantee that key leaders are informed with the newest information at all times. One method that can be used to accomplish this initiative would be to hold regular meetings (called a *shura* in the Muslim community) with local, district and provincial leaders. By doing this, it will ensure that key leaders maintain their credibility within the community and show a willingness of friendly forces to cooperate. In attempt to capture the overall function that CM would play in a COIN environment, I have created a very basic flow chart that highlights the three main steps necessary for a positive information operations campaign.



When combined, these positive effects will also lead to timely distribution of solatia payments to the appropriate members of the community. Solatia payments, a form of retribution for one's losses, along with humanitarian assistance, will seek to mitigate the second and third order effects and eliminate the chance of an insurgent IO campaign that can result following such unexpected events. However, it must be noted that solatia payments and other forms of reparation that support a positive IO campaign must come from the heart. In fact, these forms of retribution mean absolutely nothing unless they are accompanied by sincere empathy and compassion. Two ways to help demonstrate compassion and show respect in a culturally sensitive environment immediately after

such an event are by writing a letter to the victim(s) family members and organizing a community meeting (*shura*). While a letter has the chance to personally address the family members in an intimate and caring way, a key leader meeting in the community has the chance to reach a far larger audience. Both of these acts of kindness have intangible effects on community members and go a long way in winning the hearts and minds of the local populace. As a note of caution, however, these actions must be administered with a genuine sense of compassion by the U.S. and CF members involved. While this may be an obvious point, merely complying with the actions of Battle Drill #9 without authentic sympathy may do more harm than good. Given the tempo, stress and complexities of the operating environment, a situation like this is conceivable.

Consequence Management is a process that can, and should, be integrated into any foreign environment. In COIN operations, CM is critical to winning the hearts and minds of the host nation and dominating the information environment where popular support and national will are the center of gravity. If the U.S. Army were to add CM into Army Doctrine and Publications (such as FM 3-24 *Counterinsurgency*) it would significantly hamper the insurgent-led IO effort and foster a cordial environment between friendly forces and the host nation. Until then, every unit has the ability to mitigate the repercussions of unexpected events and present a positive Information Operations campaign by implementing Consequence Management into their training, standard operating procedures and tactics, techniques and procedures.

ⁱ Colonel Christopher R. Paparone, “The Nature of Soldierly Trust” Department of Command, Leadership, and Management, U.S. Army War College (USAWC), Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. Military Review: November-December, 2002, 1.

ⁱⁱ Major David Harper, The U.S. Army Professional Writing Collection, “Targeting the American Will and Other Challenges for 4th-Generation Leadership,” Military Review: March-April 2007, 1.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid., 1.

^{iv} Major Ernest Litynski, “Consequence Management: Actions; Insights; and Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures at Battalion Level and Below,” Center For Army Lessons Learned, January 2004, 1.

^v David Galula, Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice (St. Petersburg, FL: Hailer, 1964), 18.

^{vi} Chris Seiple, “Another Perspective on the Domestic Role of the Military in Consequence Management,” Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, U.S. Army Peacekeeping Institute, 1996, 1.

^{vii} Field Manual 3-11.21, *Multiservice Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Consequence Management Operations*, April 2008, Glossary 11.

^{viii} Major Ernest Litynski, “Consequence Management: Actions; Insights; and Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures at Battalion Level and Below,” Center For Army Lessons Learned, January 2004, 2.

^{ix} Ibid., 2.

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^{xi} Major Ernest Litynski, “Consequence Management: Actions; Insights; and Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures at Battalion Level and Below,” Center For Army Lessons Learned, January 2004, 1.

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supporting him and all the members of the Armed Services.